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Legislative Assembly Office

1997 Annual Report

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1997 Annual Report of the
Commonwealth Parliamentary Association
Alberta Branch



Alberta



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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
ALBERTA

February 17, 1998

To the Honourable the Speaker of the
Legislative Assembly of Alberta

I have the honour to submit the ninth annual report of the Legislative Assembly Office, as required by Standing Order 109, for the calendar year ended December 31, 1997.

This report includes the first annual report of the Alberta Branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "W.J. David McNeil".

W.J. David McNeil
Clerk of the Legislative Assembly

Legislative Assembly Office

**Alberta Branch,
Commonwealth Parliamentary Association**

1997 Annual Reports



Alberta

Prepared for the Honourable Ken Kowalski
Speaker
Legislative Assembly of Alberta



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Overview

W.J. David McNeil, Clerk of the Legislative Assembly

General Election Brings New Members, New Speaker

During 1997 the Legislative Assembly Office experienced renewal at several levels. The general election on March 11 brought us 26 new members, and the secret ballot election of April 14 gave us a new Speaker and a new leader for the LAO, the Hon. Ken Kowalski. The general election had major impacts on all branches of the Assembly, including MLA orientation, pay terminations and commencements for MLAs and staff, constituency office moves, and the like. Other highlights of the year were a dramatic decline in sitting days compared to 1996, adjusting to numerous pressures on our computer network, working through our first full year on a separate accounts processing system, implementing a new staff benefits plan, hosting an increased number of visitors, and hosting several parliamentary conferences.

Speaker Stan Schumacher led the LAO for the first three and a half months of the year. Since he had decided not to run for re-election, a change in leadership was inevitable. The election of Speaker Kowalski on the second ballot of the voting for Speaker meant that the LAO would have as leader someone who had played a major role in designing the parliamentary reforms in 1993. His 18 years of experience as an MLA, several of which as Government House Leader, enabled him to move into his new role confidently and minimized the procedural orientation he required to perform his duties.

Also on April 14 the Assembly re-elected Don Tannas as Deputy Speaker and elected Mrs. Judy Gordon as Deputy Chairman of Committees, the first woman to be elected as a presiding officer in the history of Alberta.

One of Speaker Schumacher's final acts as Speaker was to organize a new MLA orientation

process. On March 19 all members, both those with Assembly experience and those elected for the first time, were invited to attend an orientation session in the Chamber. This involved a presentation by the Speaker on the role of the Assembly and of individual MLAs and an introduction to the services provided by the LAO through its various branches. The orientation was well received and helped ensure that all MLAs started their terms in office on a positive note. Following this general orientation, MLAs were scheduled to meet individually with the Clerk and LAO managers so that they could make the necessary arrangements for constituency offices, staff, their own pay and benefits, and other services.

In terms of session, 1997 had fewer sitting days than the Assembly had experienced in recent years. The Assembly sat a total of 41 days: two in February before the election was called, 36 in the spring sittings that began April 14, and three in December to deal with the national unity debate.

An historic event occurred in the evening of April 23 when, for the first time in the Assembly's history, the presiding officer and table officers were all women. To recognize their participation in this event, on December 9 Speaker Kowalski presented a commemorative plaque to Judy Gordon, Deputy Chairman of Committees; Louise Kamuchik, Clerk Assistant; and Shannon Dean, Parliamentary Counsel.

This was the first year that the LAO had managed its financial information independently of Alberta Treasury. The new Legislative Assembly Management Information System (LAMIS) was fully implemented on April 1 and operated successfully for the remainder of the year. The related payroll system was implemented at the same time and also operated successfully. Human Resource staff used it to implement a new employee

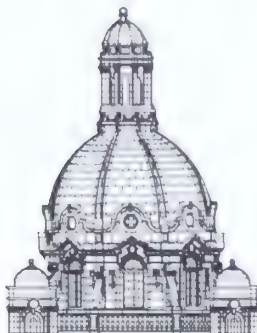
benefit plan early in the year and to accommodate the turnover in members and staff caused by the election.

Information Systems Services experienced significant pressures during the year because of changes in technology and staff turnover. The branch added three positions and experienced significant reorganization in order to help it address these pressures.

The number of visitors to the Legislature increased significantly in 1997, largely due to the promotional efforts of the staff. Public Information Branch staff also experienced large increases in gift shop activity, most of which was generated by MLAs. The branch developed several new programs during the year as well as plans for creating new public education materials to supplement those programs.

Staff from all branches of the LAO helped in hosting the Presiding Officers' Conference in January, which saw Speakers, Deputy Speakers, and Deputy Chairmen of Committees come to Edmonton to discuss issues of common interest. The LAO staff also worked together to host the Sergeant-at-Arms conference and the Canadian Council of Public Accounts Committees conference. Thanks to the efforts of the staff, Alberta continues to build on its reputation as a host of well-run and hospitable conferences.

Finally, the Assembly continued to play a key role in the activity of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA). To highlight the importance of this organization, this annual report includes an expanded section reporting on the activities of the Alberta Branch of the CPA.



Legislative Assembly Office

1997 Annual Report



Introduction

The Legislative Assembly Office: In Service to Alberta's Parliament

The origins of the Legislative Assembly Office of Alberta can be traced to the 14th century in England, when Parliament elected the first Speaker and appointed the first Clerk. Today the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly is the head of the office, and the Clerk is the Speaker's deputy. The Legislative Assembly Act of 1983 made the office's current name official.

The most common misconception about the Legislative Assembly Office is that it is a branch of the government and that its staff are government employees. However, in the parliamentary system the government is the executive branch and is responsible for applying and enforcing laws; the Legislative Assembly is the legislative branch and is responsible for establishing those laws. The Legislative Assembly Office provided various types of support to the entire Assembly, including MLAs of opposition and government parties alike.

Although the office is sometimes called the Speaker's department, it is not a government department. The Speaker does not belong to the cabinet and cannot be asked questions during Oral Question Period or participate in the Assembly's debates. The Speaker does have administrative authority and responsibility similar to that of the ministers of government departments, while the Clerk is the Speaker's chief administrative deputy and has authority and responsibility similar to that of a deputy minister of a government department.

The Speaker has two distinct but related roles. In the Assembly the Speaker maintains order and ensures that MLAs conduct their business according to the Standing Orders of the Assembly. Administratively, the Speaker is responsible for the Assembly's records and for providing services

to MLAs and the public. The latter include financial administration, purchasing, human resources, office automation assistance, public education, and the library.

The Legislative Assembly Office as a whole has the same two procedural and administrative roles. This is a unique characteristic of the office and is evident throughout the office, particularly during session, when the normal duties, work hours, and office locations of many staff change significantly.

The office's annual budget as well as statutory provisions for financial and human resource administration are under the purview of a Special Standing Committee on Members' Services. A committee of the Assembly, the Members' Services Committee also regulates constituency office support and members' pay, allowances, benefits, and group insurance plans, all of which the office administers. Traditionally, the Speaker chairs the Members' Services Committee.

Each party grouping of elected members, or caucus, is a branch of the Legislative Assembly Office. Although technically the Speaker has authority over the administration of each caucus office, for obvious reasons these branches operate with considerable autonomy. The caucus branches are therefore not part of this report; it includes only branches of the office under the Speaker's full control. However, since the caucuses receive financial, administrative, and human resource services as well as other support from other branches of the office, the branches may refer to these services in their individual reports. In addition, the office's consolidated budget estimates, which appear at the end of this report, include the estimates for the caucus branches.



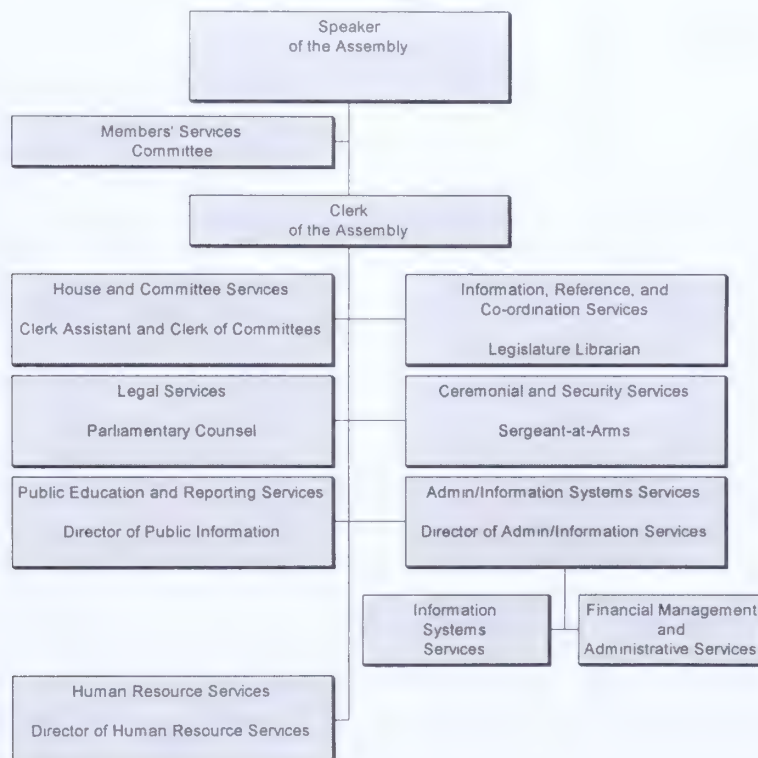
Legislative Assembly Office

Purpose Statement

Within the traditions of parliamentary democracy as constitutionally established in Alberta, the Legislative Assembly will:

1. Support members in carrying out their roles as elected representatives of the people of Alberta.
2. Support the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly in carrying out the duties of office.
3. Record the proceedings and maintain the records of the Legislative Assembly.
4. Inform and educate the public on behalf of members and the institution of Parliament.
5. Support the Assembly in protecting its institutions and privileges.
6. Support the exchange of information and ideas among Legislatures.
7. Support the officers of the Legislature as required.

Organization Chart



Function Statements

Clerk of the Assembly

- Provides advice and support to the Speaker and members on procedural and administrative matters
- Manages the Legislative Assembly Office
- Acts as Secretary of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, Alberta branch

House and Committee Services

Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Committees

- Provides procedural advice to the Speaker and members of the Assembly
- Manages support services to legislative committees
- Maintains Assembly records
- Manages production of Assembly documents

Information, Reference and Co-ordination Services

Legislature Librarian

- Provides information and reference services to the Legislative Assembly
- Co-ordinates a number of co-operative programs among Alberta government libraries

Legal Services

Parliamentary Counsel

- Provides legal services to the Speaker, members of the Assembly, and staff of the Legislative Assembly Office
- Drafts Assembly documents, including private members' bills and motions
- Provides legal services to the Chief Electoral Officer and Ethics Commissioner

Ceremonial and Security Services

Sergeant-at-Arms

- Provides security services to the Legislative Assembly
- Provides page and messenger services to the Assembly during its sittings

Public Education and Reporting Services

Director of Public Information

- Produces the official report of what is said during meetings of the Legislative Assembly and its committees
- Welcomes visitors and provides public education services for the Legislative Assembly
- Provides public information about the Legislative Assembly
- Prints and distributes Assembly publications

Human Resource Services

Director of Human Resource Services

- Provides human resource management services to the Legislative Assembly

Administrative/Information Systems Services

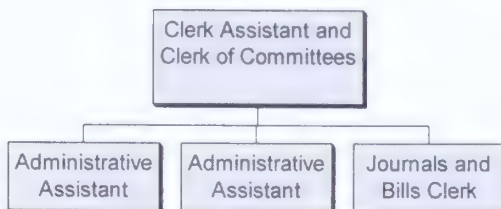
Director of Administrative/Information Systems Services

- Provides financial and administrative support to the Legislative Assembly
- Provides electronic data processing and office automation services to the Legislative Assembly
- Acts as co-ordinator for the administration of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act
- Provides records management services to the LAO



House and Committee Services

Louise J. Kamuchik, Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Committees



Another very busy year for the House and Committee Services branch started with the Presiding Officers' Conference, held in Edmonton at the end of January. The year continued at a hectic pace with the February session, the March provincial election, the First Session of the 24th Legislature on April 14, the election of a new Speaker, and the creation of a new Ombudsman Search Committee. The branch remained busy to the end of the year with Alberta's hosting of the Canadian Council of Public Accounts Committees (CCPAC), a number of committee meetings in the fall, and a short but intense December session.

Alberta hosted the 14th Presiding Officers' Conference from January 23 to 26. Speakers from the House of Commons, the Senate, and most provincial Legislatures as well as the Yukon and Northwest Territories enjoyed the balmy -42 Celsius temperature as they took part in business sessions held at Government House and various social functions.

The conference was quickly followed by the Fifth Session of the 23rd Legislature, which began on February 10. The Provincial Treasurer tabled the province's 1997-98 budget estimates the following day. This tabling was immediately followed by the Premier's announcement of a March 11 election.

The dissolution of the 23rd Legislature saw the departure of a number of members who decided not to seek re-election, including the then Speaker, the Hon. Stanley Schumacher, and five

cabinet ministers. An additional 18 non-executive members were either defeated or chose not to run again.

The election saw the number of seats held by PCs increase from 51 to 63, the Liberals' decrease from 32 to 18, and, after a four-year hiatus, the New Democrat Party back in the Legislature with two seats. After a whirlwind orientation for new and returning members the First Session of the 24th Legislature began on April 14.

The April 15 Speech from the Throne welcomed 57 returning members and 26 new ones. The budget was presented by the Provincial Treasurer on April 21.

The 1997 Ombudsman Search Committee, composed of private members from both the government and Official Opposition, was established on May 20. After a number of day-long meetings, during which the committee reviewed some 241 applications from across Canada, the committee selected Mr. Gerrard Gwynn Scott Sutton to become Alberta's sixth Ombudsman. The appointment is effective April 1, 1998, pending approval by the Assembly.

Three private members' public bills received Royal Assent during the First Session: the Crown Contracts Dispute Resolution Act, the Provincial Court Amendment Act, 1997, and the Protection from Second-hand Smoke in Public Buildings Act. A total of 12 private members' public bills have now received Royal Assent since the 1993 changes to the Standing Orders.

Two days following the June 16 adjournment of session, Mr. Grant Mitchell announced he

would be resigning as the leader of the Liberal Party. The leadership voting is scheduled to take place in April 1998.

The Assembly met for three days from December 8 through 10. Unanimous consent was granted to waive a number of Standing Orders in order to facilitate the debate on Government Motion 23. The unanimous passing of the motion confirmed the Assembly's support of the principles embodied in the elements of the Calgary Framework for Discussion on National Unity.

The 18th Annual Conference of the Canadian Council of Public Accounts Committees (CCPAC) was hosted by the Alberta Public Accounts Committee in Edmonton from September 14 to 16 in conjunction with the Conference of Legislative Auditors (COLA), hosted by the Alberta Office of the Auditor General. The conference was attended by 49 delegates from across Canada and included delegates from Western Australia and New South Wales.

Following proclamation of the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund Act in 1996, the Standing Committee on the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund carried out its new mandate of receiving and reviewing quarterly reports on the operation of the fund, approval of its annual report, and review of the yearly performance of the fund. A total of four public meetings on the fund's investment activities were held in the fall in Edmonton, Calgary, Peace River, and Medicine Hat. Invitations to interested Albertans and groups were issued through advertisements in the communities' daily newspapers, and an additional 2,300 invitations were also issued to various individuals, groups, and organizations.

The active standing committees in 1997 were the Standing Committee on Public Accounts (8 meetings), the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund (6 committee and 4 public meetings), Legislative Offices (7), Private Bills (5), the Select Special Ombudsman Search Committee (6), and Members' Services (4). Designated supply subcom-

mittees were again established by the Committee of Supply, along with four other subcommittees of supply.

Tablings required by statute increased substantially over 1996, with a slight increase experienced in petitions presented and petitions read and received. There was also a slight decrease in voluntary tablings over the previous year.

The branch continued its practice of co-operating with other jurisdictions in responding to numerous surveys and questionnaires on Assembly and committee procedures. The Clerk Assistant continued to provide administrative support to the proposed Alberta branch of the America Region of the International Assembly of French-speaking Parliaments and provided administrative support to members attending the first-ever Parliamentary Conference of the Americas (COPA), hosted by the National Assembly of Quebec in September. Parliamentarians from over 300 legislative assemblies of the western hemisphere met to discuss the issues and impacts of the integration of the Americas by the year 2005 and the role elected members should play in this undertaking. They were joined by heads of international organizations, nongovernmental organizations, and research institutes as they examined the legislative, political, social, economic, and cultural aspects of the proposed integration.

As part of the ongoing responsibilities associated with their positions, branch staff attended the professional development seminar for Canadian Clerks-at-the-Table and also went on attachment to the House of Commons and Senate to meet with senior staff officials. In addition, one member of the Standing Committee on Legislative Offices, accompanied by a branch staff member, represented the committee at the Canadian Ombudsman Conference held in Regina, Saskatchewan, and also attended the Council on Governmental Ethics Laws Conference held in Edmonton.

Comparative Statistics

		1997 First Session 24th Legislature	1997 Fifth Session 23rd Legislature	1996 Fourth Session 23rd Legislature
Sitting Days	Spring	36	2	54
	Fall	3	0	7
Evening Sittings	Spring	25	0	39
	Fall	2	0	5
Government Bills	Introduced	34	1	48
	Rec'd Royal Assent	29	0	48
Private Bills	Introduced	7	0	5
	Rec'd Royal Assent	7	0	5
Private Members' Public Bills	Introduced	19	20	25
	Rec'd Royal Assent	3	0	3
Government Motions	Debated	23	6	25
	Agreed to	22	5	23
	Withdrawn	0	0	0
Private Members' Motions	Placed on Order Paper	88	81	81
	Agreed to	4	0	5
	Defeated	3	0	10
	Withdrawn	2	0	2
Written Questions	Placed on Order Paper	29	(on notice) 5	23
	Accepted	16	0	15
	Rejected	0	0	4
	Withdrawn	0	0	0
Motions for Returns	Placed on Order Paper	55	(on notice) 2	35
	Accepted	18	0	19
	Rejected	7	0	10
	Withdrawn	0	0	1
Committee of Supply (days)	Main Estimates	20	0	20
	Heritage Savings Trust Fund	0	0	0
	Capital Fund	0	0	0
	Lottery Fund	1	0	1
	Supplementary	2	0	2
Designated Supply Subcommittees (hours) (1997: Environmental Protection, Family and Social Services, Health, Justice and Attorney General, Labour)		20	0	20
Tablings and Filings	Tablings Required by Statute	154	18	82
	Voluntary tablings	531	23	790
Petitions (excluding Private Bills)	Presented	114	8	96
	Read and Received	58	0	46
Members' Statements		54	3	93
Ministerial Statements		12	0	20



Information, Reference, and Co-ordination Services: Legislature Library

Lorne Buhr, Legislature Librarian

The library's emphasis in 1997 continued to be in alerting members, their staff, and staff of the LAO to new sources of information in whatever format it might exist, including the Internet. The purchase of new resources, not only books, documents, and periodicals, is especially challenging because of budget constraints. The library seeks to ensure that its primary users are served by up-to-date and accurate information. The library continued to provide enhanced access to its collections and to improve on service to its clients through a number of initiatives.

A major project completed in 1997 was individual orientation packages for each of the 83 MLAs following the March 11 general election. The packages contained data and references relating to each member's constituency. A smaller, related project provided departmental packages to all MLAs newly appointed to cabinet after the election. Both of these efforts were very well received and now provide a database for ongoing provision of this kind of information.

Work continued on enhancement of the Union List of Serials database, with Internet access implemented in October. This is a valuable source of current research information for MLAs, staff, all government department libraries, and the public. The branch made significant progress in updating the database with the addition of 50 percent of government periodicals storage facility holdings. The library co-ordinates this facility where government libraries store older and less-used periodicals. This work was made possible, in part, by the recruitment of summer students under the STEP and Young Canada Works in Heritage Institutions programs.

The library continued to produce and enhance the *Directory of Alberta Government Libraries and Resource Centres* and the *Alberta Government Libraries Newsletter*. The branch began a new alerting service called *WebWatch* to

help members and staff locate authoritative and up-to-date information on the Internet.

The information and reference services section produces *Selected Periodical Articles* and *New Books in the Library* monthly. The latter is made available to Alberta government department and agency staff, thus assuring wide usage of the library's books and documents. The branch continues to add to the number of users within the Assembly and constituency offices who receive these lists electronically.

In addition to its primary users, the branch continues to serve the offices of the Information and Privacy Commissioner, the Auditor General, and the Ethics Commissioner. Since 1906 the library has also served all the residents of the province. The Legislature Library is used by those who wish to access an excellent collection of Canadian and Alberta documents, books on public issues, and Alberta newspapers. Its unique materials are a significant provincial resource.

Use of the library, as reflected by our statistics, continues to be lower, after previous larger declines in the early 1990s when government downsizing began. The number of dial-in calls to our catalogue are about the same as in 1996, which was the first year of this service. Internet access was implemented this year, and by December 1,000 connections had been made. Users appear to appreciate having the ability to visit our main database electronically, and staff are also freed up to do more useful work. It is clear that the traditional way of doing library work and tracking the numbers is changing drastically.

These trends in library usage rates are similar to those experienced by other parliamentary libraries. The Legislature Library's aim is to ensure that its primary users are aware of the library's array of capabilities to help with their information needs.

A number of significant changes took place in the automation and technical side of library operations. Dynix release 161, an upgrade to our

catalogue automation, was installed in August, and the AIX system software was upgraded in September. By the end of the year the list of borrowers in our automated circulation system stood at over 1,300.

Our holdings of Alberta weekly newspapers now show on both our Union List of Serials database and the main library catalogue. Dial-in and LAO network users will find the listings in two places. The number of interlibrary loan requests indicates that users are finding these unique resources helpful to their work.

Throughout the year staff were busy inputting records of holdings for our thousands of serial and periodical titles. Users can now see that the most recent issue received is noted when checking a title online. By the end of 1998 all currently received newspaper titles and their holdings should also be current on the database.

Co-operative government library services staff continued to support the Alberta Government Libraries' Council by serving on several committees, including the performance measures committee, and providing additional secretariat support and technical advice in the wake of continued downsizing.

There was a decrease in the volume processed by the Alberta government libraries interlibrary loan service. This decrease resulted from the closure of one government library and the loss of several Alberta Vocational College clients due to a change in governance.

The library's long-term project of microfilming Alberta weekly newspapers continued. During

1997 the library, in partnership with the Olds Historical Society and the Glenbow Institute, completed microfilming the Olds newspapers for 1907-1992. In December the pre-1950 newspapers for Clyde, Jarrow, Lake Saskatoon, Millet, New Sarepta, Ribstone, Ryley, Sangudo, and Waterhole were sent for filming. Staff are presently planning for the preservation of the 1963-1992 Wetaskiwin newspapers. This project will be undertaken in partnership with interested parties in Wetaskiwin. The Legislature Librarian and Assistant Legislature Librarian, seeking to establish closer ties with groups interested in newspaper preservation, made a presentation this year to the executive of the Alberta Weekly Newspapers Association.

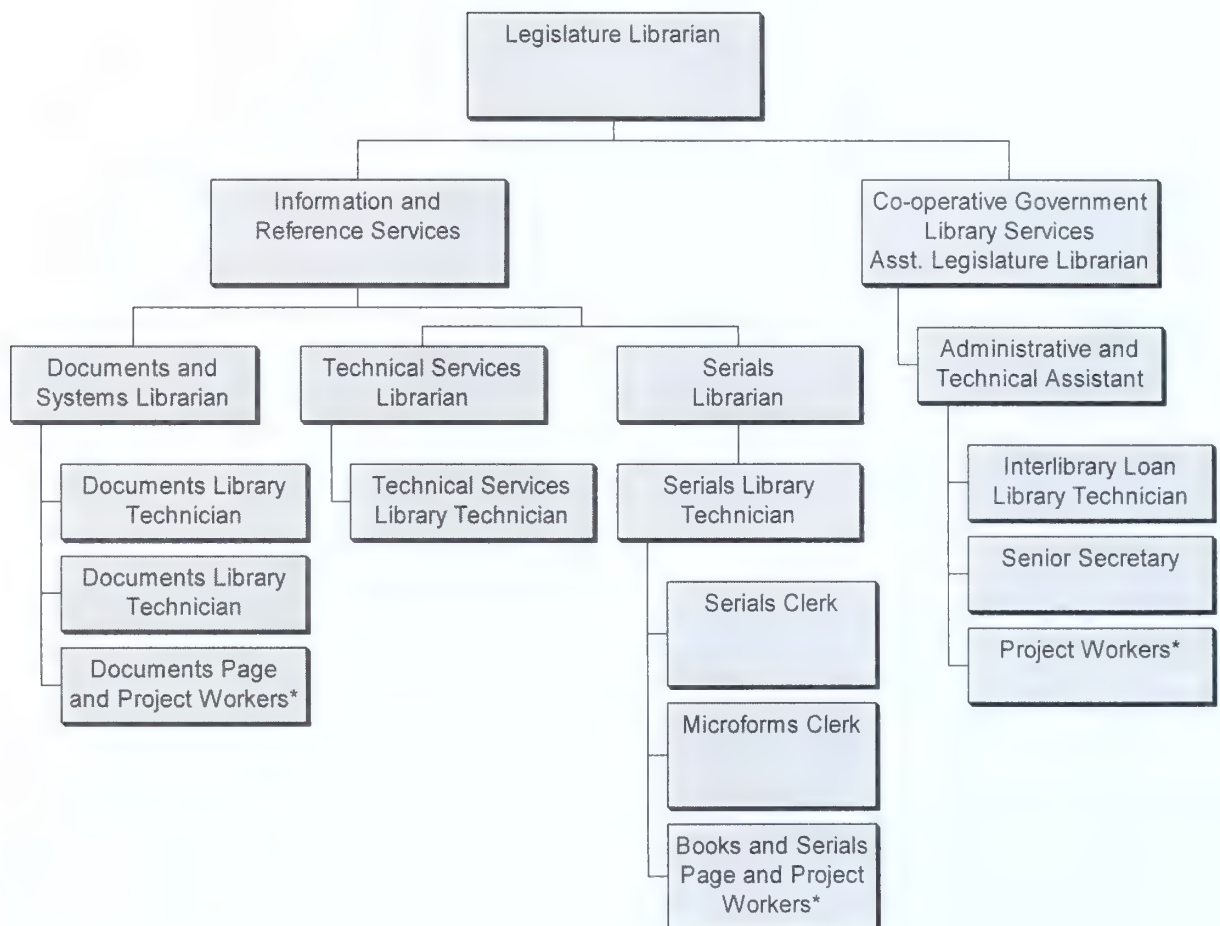
The library again provided orientation sessions for Assembly staff and constituency office staff. These sessions are a wonderful way to introduce new users to the library's resources.

In December the library gave its first-ever library orientation and introduction to Alberta legislation sources to Grant MacEwan Community College's students in journalism. For the third winter the library hosted a student from the University of Alberta's school of library and information studies. We provide a setting for students to get the equivalent of a full week of practical experience.

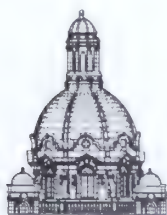
Deborah Parkinson joined our staff as documents library technician in January 1997, filling a position vacated late in 1996. Library staff attended the Alberta Association of Library Technicians' annual conference in Lethbridge and the Alberta Library Conference in Jasper.

Comparative Statistics

	1997	1996
Information and Reference Services		
Total number of volumes (by conventional count)	277,366	268,231
Circulation (items borrowed for use outside the library)	6,824	7,215
Number of requests requiring less than 15 minutes to complete	6,811	7,231
Number of requests requiring 15 minutes to one hour to complete	846	1,001
Number of requests requiring more than one hour to complete	51	66
Number of DialPac inquiries of our on-line catalogue	2,215	2,062
Co-operative Government Library Services		
Titles in Union List of Serials in Alberta government libraries	12,375	12,950
Number of requests by the Alberta government libraries interlibrary loan services	2,707	3,888
Number of requests by Alberta government libraries for consultation or reference	59	54

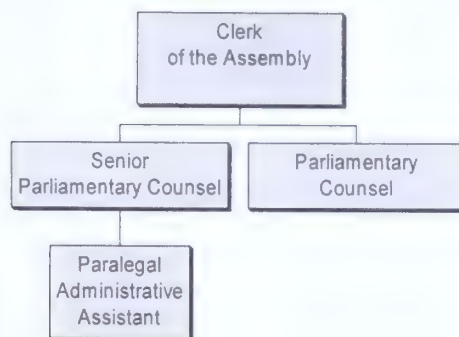
Legislature Library Organization Chart

*indicates part-time or wage staff



Legal Services

*Robert Reynolds, Senior Parliamentary Counsel, and
Shannon Dean, Parliamentary Counsel*



The past year was very busy for the Parliamentary Counsel office. In addition to other responsibilities, Parliamentary Counsel prepared and assisted in sessional periods in February, April through June, and December. Counsel continued to provide legal and procedural advice to the Speaker, members, the committees of the Assembly, the Legislative Assembly Office, and, on request, officers of the Legislature.

For the first time in several years there was no change in the personnel of the office. Rob Reynolds and Shannon Dean continued as Parliamentary Counsel and Florence Marston as Assistant. The office had additional assistance during the summer months from a STEP student who was hired to work on various research projects related to parliamentary law and procedure. In December Rob Reynolds became Senior Parliamentary Counsel.

The Fifth Session of the 23rd Legislature began on February 10, 1997, with the Speech from the Throne, followed the next day by the Budget Address. That same day, the Legislature was dissolved for a general election. Despite the short session 20 private members' bills were introduced. Speaker Schumacher also delivered a ruling concerning the order in which private members' bills were to be considered and the procedure to be fol-

lowed should a member wish his or her private member's bill to be considered either earlier or later than its appointed date.

During the election period counsel were called upon to provide advice on a host of issues related to dissolution. The office worked closely with the Clerk and Clerk Assistant to develop orientation materials for the new presiding officers and members.

The few months following the election were busy reviewing new agreements, such as employment contracts and constituency office leases, to replace those contracts which lapsed upon the calling of the election. Parliamentary Counsel also experienced a significant workload in preparing private members' public bills for the First Session of the 24th Legislature. Counsel also worked with other LAO staff to advise new members on parliamentary procedure and law.

Before the session adjourned on June 16, 19 private members' public bills were introduced, and three received Royal Assent. Thirty-four government bills were introduced, and 29 received Royal Assent.

A number of procedural issues arose during the session. In particular, the introduction of a number of omnibus bills by the government led to issues raised in the House regarding whether the chair could divide bills and whether the Assembly could give instructions to a committee to

divide a bill. Following precedents from other Canadian and Commonwealth jurisdictions, the Speaker ruled that he would not divide the bills in question. Furthermore, there was no direct authority for a motion to divide a bill in Committee of the Whole.

In June the leader of the New Democrat opposition raised a question of privilege regarding her request to introduce a bill out of the order determined in a pre-session draw. Privilege is the most serious matter for the Assembly as it concerns the law of parliament and the rights and immunities of its members. In this instance the Speaker ruled that the matter was really one of administration and not one of parliamentary privilege. He reviewed the major changes that had occurred to the procedure for private members' bills since the 1993 amendments to the Standing Orders whereby these bills receive more attention in the Assembly than was previously the case. On June 16, the date of the Speaker's ruling, the leader of the New Democrat opposition tabled a draft version of the bill.

Parliamentary Counsel continued to provide support for the Standing Committee on Private Bills by working with petitioners for private bills, co-ordinating the process for bringing these bills to committee, and providing legal advice to the committee. Counsel also assisted in the orientation of a new chairman and other new members concerning the functions of the committee. In 1997 the committee studied seven private bills, all of which were recommended to the Assembly.

No bills were introduced during the December sitting as the sole matter for consideration of the Assembly was Government Motion 23. This motion expressed support for the principles of the Calgary Framework for Discussion on National Unity reached by nine Premiers and two territorial leaders in September. For this three-day sitting

the House unanimously agreed to waive certain Standing Orders so that this motion was the only business before the House after the daily routine.

During the summer and fall Parliamentary Counsel were involved in representing the Legislative Assembly Office in an inquiry regarding a request for information made pursuant to the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. This inquiry involved a tremendous amount of work and taxed the resources of the office.

In July Rob Reynolds presented a discussion paper on parliamentary privilege at the Canadian Sergeant-at-Arms conference held in Edmonton. In September both counsel attended the annual meeting of the Association of Parliamentary Counsel in Canada, which was held in Winnipeg. Shannon Dean presented a paper on the effect of dissolution on the status of members. Rob Reynolds led a roundtable discussion on the topic of copyright. During late October and early November Shannon Dean participated in a two-week secondment at the Parliament of Canada, where she was involved in orientations to the federal Houses and met with numerous officials associated with the Table and legal services for both Houses.

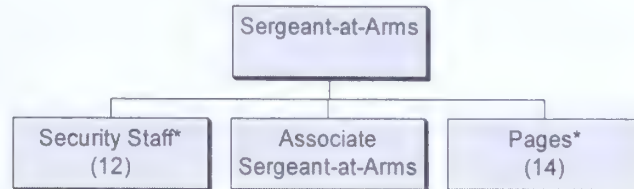
Parliamentary Counsel also assisted in hosting the Presiding Officers' Conference, which was held in January at Government House. The office also participated in briefing delegations from the Ukraine on Canada's constitutional system and the privileges and procedures of Alberta's Legislative Assembly.

Finally, Parliamentary Counsel also continued to act in an advisory role to both the public and the legal profession on matters concerning parliamentary law and the procedures of the Legislative Assembly.



Ceremonial and Security Services

Brian Hodgson, Sergeant-at-Arms



The branch took steps to improve security for the Chamber and staff areas of the LAO, provided security support to MLAs and constituency offices, administered the legislative page program, and was involved in several special events. Ceremonial and Security Services also developed a proposal for a youth model parliament and hosted the Canadian Sergeants-at-Arms conference in Edmonton in August.

Technical upgrading to the security systems in the Chamber and precincts was completed early in 1997, prior to the opening of the February session. During sessional periods throughout the year the branch dealt with over 6,900 visitors to the galleries and provided security for members and staff for 41 sitting days, 27 evening sittings, and 24 committee meetings. Security was also provided for five youth parliaments held in the Chamber sponsored by the Alberta Debate and Speech Association, Parlement Jeunesse de l'Alberta, Mount Royal College Debating Society, University of Alberta Model Parliament, and the Forum for Young Albertans. As well, the branch co-ordinated arrangements for these groups to use other areas in the Legislature Building.

The Speaker identified a need for further educational outreach directly related to the branch's involvement in model parliament activity. Consequently, the branch developed a detailed proposal for a youth model parliament co-ordinated through the Legislative Assembly Office. The Royal Canadian Legion has agreed to

sponsor this program, which is planned to start up in 1998.

The branch developed terms of reference for a Security Co-ordination Committee involving Department of Justice Protection Services, PWSS, and the Legislative Assembly Security Staff. The objectives of the committee are to ensure that security services provided within the Legislature site are integrated, complete, and well planned. With the Department of Justice Protection Services the branch also conducted security awareness sessions for LAO and caucus employees. The branch continues to work with the Department of Justice Protection Services and with Public Works, Supply and Services to ensure that the needs of the security stakeholders are met.

Staff dealt with numerous security issues and security concerns raised by members and constituency office staff, ranging from threatening letters and telephone calls to advice on how to deal with angry and confrontational persons. At constituency offices there were two break-ins and one attempted break-in. The total value of damage and items taken was \$6,600. None of the offices involved was equipped with an alarm system. The branch also oversaw the tendering and co-ordination of some 17 security alarm systems installed at constituency offices throughout the province.

Staff made 62 visits to constituency offices all over Alberta. These visits were well received as a number of offices were staffed with new employees or had moved as a result of electoral boundary

revision or the provincial election in March.

The branch provided advice to members, staff, federal and civic officials, and the public on a range of questions from the use of flags to aspects of funeral arrangements to ceremonies in the Chamber. The branch took part in the 50th Anniversary Citizenship Court held in the Chamber on January 21, as well as the laying up of the 180 Corps Royal Canadian Army Cadets Corps flag on February 23. This ceremony, which took place in the rotunda, involved 150 Cadets, the Speaker, the Colonel Commandant of the Royal Canadian Army Cadets, officials from the Army Cadet League of Alberta, and over 120 spectators. The branch also co-ordinated the presentation of poppies on October 20 marking the beginning of the 1997 Poppy Campaign. The branch also assisted with many civil service orientation tours, talked to school groups, and provided access and tours of the Chamber and precincts to numerous guests of members.

Ceremonial and Security Services participated in over 25 interviews of prospective pages and ran a page development program involving weekly seminars and a speech competition. The competition was sponsored by TransAlta Utilities Corpo-

ration and judged by Deputy Speaker Don Tanas, Parliamentary Counsel Shannon Dean, and the Alberta Debate and Speech Association's Simon Muller. This year's topic, chosen from the conference topics for the 42nd Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference in Kuala Lumpur, was "How can parliamentary democracy be updated and improved?" Melanie Ramsum won the competition. Second place went to Joel Scheurman and third to Kevin Sporns.

Finally, the branch hosted the XVIth Annual Canadian Sergeant-at-Arms Conference in August. Sergeants-at-Arms from provincial Legislatures, the House of Commons, the Northwest Territories, Australia, and the United Kingdom attended the conference, which included presentations by the Canadian Security Intelligence Service, Edmonton Police Service, Department of Justice Protection Services, the Alberta Legislative Assembly's Parliamentary Counsel, and the Sergeant-at-Arms. The branch is most grateful to former Speaker's Page Vincent Tong, Head Page Joel Sheurman, Associate Sergeant-at-Arms Allen Gowler, and Legislative Assembly Security staff Dianne Koenig and Bill Semple for their efforts in support of the conference.



Public Education and Reporting Services: Public Information Branch

Gary Garrison, Director of Public Information

Although the number of session days was much lower than in recent years, the branch experienced significant increases in visitor numbers, MLA promotional items, and retail gift shop sales. As well, several new programs were initiated during the year. Public education plans were drawn up, and progress was made on several other projects as well. In addition, the branch supported Alberta's hosting the Presiding Officers' Conference, participated in the MLA orientation after the March election, and continued to play lead roles in the national associations of *Hansard* and legislative visitor services. Staff also built upon the branch's well-established connection with the tourism industry and began to develop closer ties with the Alberta Museum Association.

With only 41 total sitting days in the year, the branch was unable to retain about a third of the *Hansard* sessional staff beyond the spring sitting. The Assembly sat for two days in February, 36 days between April 15 and June 16, and three days in the second week of December. *Hansard* staff worked through the estimates subcommittee process successfully for the second year. Despite a workload for three weeks that was nearly double the normal maximum workload, staff managed to produce the required transcripts within the prescribed deadlines and to meet the normal high standard for accuracy. At the end of the year a competition was held for eight new input editors who were scheduled to start training early in the new year in anticipation of the January 27 opening day.

The number of information inquiries was virtually unchanged from 1996, even though the number of sitting days was down by approximately one-third. Staff also handled a significant increase in MLA gift purchasing activity, with MLA purchases up nearly 30 percent over 1996

and public sales up 6 percent. This increase had a major impact on the workload of the staff involved, including those engaged in purchasing the inventory.

Visitor traffic increased 17 percent over 1996. By and large this increase is attributable to the promotional efforts of the staff and the additional means employed to provide services to visitors. These included:

- Marketing the site in partnership with other tourism operators in Edmonton;
- Providing guide services in numerous foreign languages;
- Developing a more proactive approach to welcoming unbooked visitors, particularly tour bus groups; namely, greeting them on the grounds or at the door of their buses instead of at the door of the Legislature Building;
- Opening the Rotunda and Interpretive Centre in the evenings and booking choirs to perform Christmas songs during the two weeks before Christmas; and
- Developing three new programs.

The program development process involved work teams comprised of full-time and part-time staff. All three programs started up in November. First, the indoor health walk in the pedway was kicked off November 12 with Speaker Kowalski and Bill Dean of the MacEwan Centre for Sport and Wellness presiding. This project was a joint effort of the branch and the MacEwan Centre.

The second program, Preserve Our World (POW), was developed in partnership with Alberta Environmental Protection. It was designed for grade 4 and opened up a new education market for the Legislative Assembly. Because the Alberta curriculum focuses on local or provincial government only in grade 6, the overwhelming majority of school groups who visited were at that level. POW teaches children about waste management

by engaging them in several hands-on activities and emphasizes that all the provincial laws governing waste are passed at the Legislature by people their parents elect.

The Mock Legislature program involves grade 6 students in parliamentary debate themselves. They are guided through the process of passing a bill on a subject of their choice. A key element of this program is the replica Chamber that was set up in the interpretive centre using refurbished school desks made to simulate the look and feel of the MLAs' desks in the Chamber. Public Works staff played an important role in making the furniture presentable and matching the furniture colours of the actual Chamber. Replica robes were made for students playing the roles of Lieutenant Governor, Speaker, Clerk, and Sergeant-at-Arms. The replica Speaker's chair built for the interpretive centre's opening in 1994 also became part of this replica Chamber. Because of popular demand for this program even from its startup, the theatre is used as well when two groups come for it at the same time.

Work progressed on two new public education materials for children, an activity book for grades K through 4 and a full-colour poster for grade 6 which incorporates numerous educational activities on the reverse side. Both of these projects are expected to be completed by the end of the 1997-98 fiscal year.

The pedway and interpretive centre featured numerous exhibits loaned by museums, corporations, and associations featuring the history and function of railways in Alberta. Special events around the Legislature for which the branch provided support included: the K-days breakfast, Halloween-o-Rama, the Princess Diana tribute signing, the Christmas light-up, the kickoff for the International Day to Eliminate Racial Discrimina-

tion, a memorial service for the 14 women murdered in Montreal in 1989, the Canadian Council of Public Accounts Committees, the Presiding Officers' Conference, the staff Christmas craft sale, and an appreciation dinner for LAO staff.

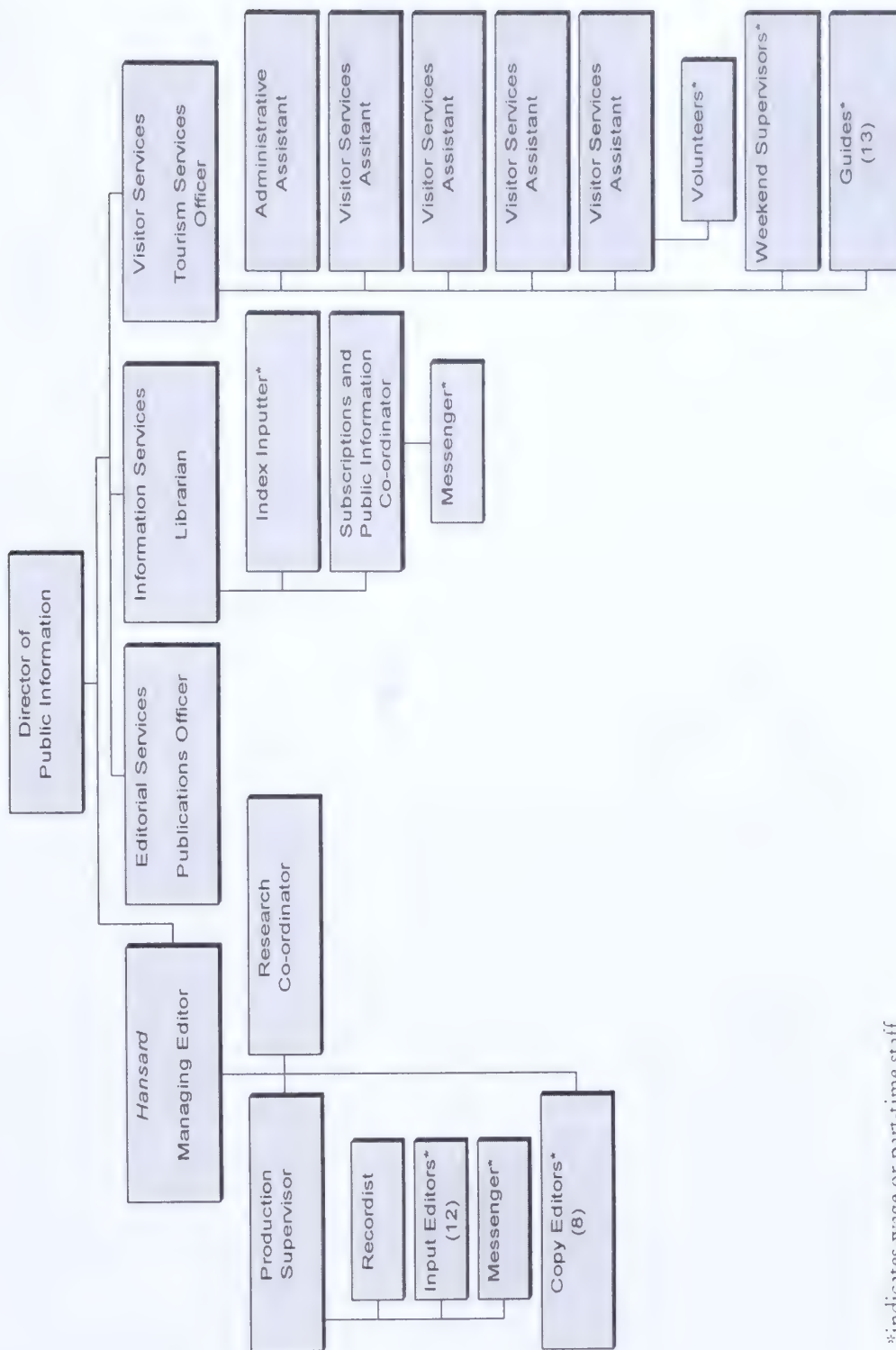
The branch continued to produce the LAO annual report, the *Under the Dome* staff newsletter, *Preview*, updates to the *Members' Guide*, the opening day program, and the seating plan. As well, the director continued to manage the television programming and broadcasting arrangements for Assembly proceedings.

Early in the year the director completed his involvement in the renewal of the *Hansard* contract for the Yukon Assembly. In August he presented a paper on his role in that process to the annual conference of the *Hansard* Association of Canada. The managing editor represented *Alberta Hansard* at the conference. The director also continued to serve as Secretary-Treasurer of the association. In that capacity he worked with two others to develop the association website, which started up in December and of which he is webmaster.

All areas of the branch were involved in preparing for the systems upgrade from DOS to a Windows environment. New programs were initiated to deal with Assembly subscriptions, the *Hansard* index, and visitor services reservations, since the present software is not compatible with Windows.

The director and the tourism services officer attended the national legislative visitor services conference and the Alberta Museums Conference. The tourism services officer also attended the Travel Alberta conference and participated in a tourism marketing venture in Vancouver with other Edmonton partners to encourage Pacific Rim visitors to come to the Legislature.

Public Information Branch Organization Chart



*indicates wage or part-time staff

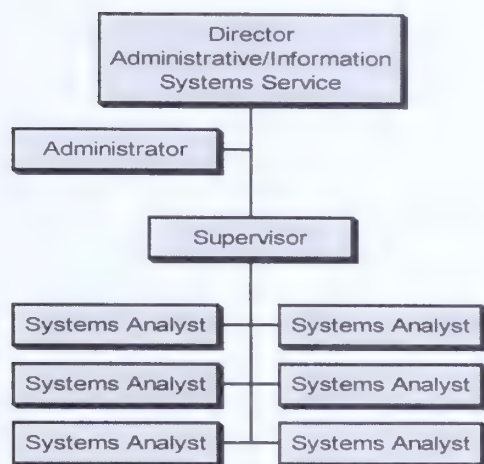
Comparative Statistics

	1997	1996
Visitors to Legislature and Interpretive Centre		
Visitors on tour	43,404	41,245
Special events	11,749	8,335
Casual	40,117	31,608
Total	95,270	81,188
Tours and Programs		
Regular tours	2,840	2,493
Tours including Premier's office	17	17
VIP tours	21	13
Educational programs	337	261
Civil service orientation	11	4
Total	3,246	2,788
Gift shop sales	\$ 69,803	\$ 65,824
MLA promotional items	\$130,666	\$100,581
Gallery seats reserved	6,967	9,803
Volunteer hours	626	510
Public Information and Subscriptions		
Public information calls	8,589	8,597
Congratulatory scrolls	2,330	2,769
Paid subscriptions		
Daily <i>Hansard</i>	307	246
<i>Hansard</i> bound volumes	46	55
Bills, Votes	296	229
<i>Journals</i>	296	459
Complimentary issues		
Daily <i>Hansard</i>	347	233
<i>Hansard</i> bound volumes	100	91
Bills, Votes	506	903
Order Paper	316	354
<i>Hansard</i> index and on-line inquiries	96	141
Assembly Statistics		
Sitting days	41	61
Evening sittings	27	44
Sitting hours	209	366
<i>Hansard</i> pages	1,454	2,464
Subcommittees of Supply		
Meetings reported	17	19
Meeting hours	39	43
Transcript pages	270	314
Committee meetings reported	41	44
Committee meeting hours	71	83
Committee transcript pages	546	692
Other meetings reported	0	2
Other meeting hours	0	2
Other meeting transcript pages	0	14
Total <i>Hansard</i> and committee pages	2,270	3,484



Administrative/Information Systems Services: Information Systems Service

Bill Gano, Director of Administrative/Information Systems Services



Major changes occurred in the branch in 1997. Information Systems Services experienced a significant turnover of staff, implemented numerous technical improvements to the network, and dealt with several matters related to the March general election. Because of higher user expectations, technological advances, and other issues, the branch devoted considerable effort towards reviewing its mandate and organization and made some adjustments. In addition, the Director participated in various activities as freedom of information and protection of privacy co-ordinator and senior financial officer.

The biggest organizational change of the year involved hiring a systems analyst supervisor. In all, the branch added three new positions, which were needed because of the increasing complexity of the network and the demands placed on the branch by users.

The branch experienced a 90 percent turnover of staff during the year, largely due to the rapidly

growing demand for systems analysts in the marketplace. Despite this change in personnel, the branch was able to respond effectively to its increasing workload.

The March general election resulted in a number of additional activities. First, the branch developed a multimedia presentation on services provided by the Legislative Assembly Office. This presentation became part of the members' orientation session in the Chamber spearheaded by Speaker Schumacher in late March. Second, branch staff trained new personnel hired by MLAs in how to use the LAO computer system. Finally, the branch was required to move computer equipment when constituency offices moved and caucus allocations changed.

To provide better response times and to enable the network to handle Windows 95 applications, both the Legislature Building and the Annex were rewired and the system layout was streamlined. Many workstations were upgraded to the new Windows 95 technology.

The branch continued to test, install, maintain, and upgrade in-house information management systems, including accounts payable, payroll, inventory, and point-of-sale systems.

The government converted its financial records to the Integrated Management Information System (IMAGIS) in 1997. This resulted in numerous meetings with Treasury officials to determine how best to meet the Legislative Assembly's reporting requirements for accounts payable and payroll.

Ongoing activities for the branch included purchasing, installing, moving and maintaining computer terminals, printers, and software. Network servers and workstations as well as remote workstations continued to be maintained and upgraded to remain current with today's technology. A new colour laser printer/photocopier was obtained and made available to

network users. As well, major upgrades were undertaken for the on-line integrated library system.

The branch provided numerous training programs on word processing, spreadsheets, E-mail, database software, freedom of information and protection of privacy, and financial systems. As well, the branch's main telephone number became a help line, and services were reorganized to ensure prompt responses to calls received whenever the office was open.

The Legislative Assembly Management Information System (LAMIS) continued to provide keyword search facilities to *Hansard* and Alberta Statutes, as well as:

- Bill status,
- Tablings,
- Government motions,
- Private members' motions,
- Written questions and motions for returns,
- RITE directory,
- Searches for government program information (SPERG),

- Committees and Commissions, and
- Canadian phone books.

Information Systems continues to develop the Legislative Assembly's site on the worldwide web. The Assembly's home page was expanded, and home pages for the Auditor General, the Chief Electoral Officer, and the office of the Ombudsman were maintained on the Assembly's home page.

The long-term strategic plan for electronic data processing (EDP) was updated, and budget priorities were established for Information Systems in preparation for presentation to the Members' Services Committee in November.

In addition, the director addressed issues related to FOIP, records management, and his role as senior financial officer. These included initiating procedures to establish a separate Legislative Assembly bank account and a formal hearing before the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Commissioner regarding release of member information.

Comparative Statistics

	1997	1996
Equipment in place:		
Constituency workstations	109	109
Constituency printers	101	99
LAN workstations	163	150
LAN laser printers	56	53
Dedicated library workstations	18	16
Servers	21	16
Scanners	3	3
Notebook computers	61	57
Equipment replaced:		
Obsolete workstations	65	65
Obsolete laser printers	17	13
Obsolete notebook computers	8	n/a
Training:		
Person-days of training	175	89



Administrative/Information Systems Services: Financial Management and Administrative Services

Jacqueline Breault, Manager of Financial Management and Administrative Services

This has been a year characterized by change. Changes in clientele resulting from the March election and staff turnover have challenged the branch to become more flexible, innovative, and service-oriented. This has, in turn, changed expectations of what the branch can achieve as staff gain skills and knowledge in the area of financial management and administration. Challenges were met and faced throughout the year as financial systems were enhanced and processes and procedures reviewed. In a very busy year the branch remained focused on building on relationships with clients through orientation sessions as well as individual meetings.

In its first full year of operations the Assembly's new Dynamics financial system was a success. Staff used Dynamics to administer all accounts payable, revenues/accounts receivable, inventory, and general ledger functions for the Legislative Assembly Office as well as the accounts payable and general ledger functions for the office of the Ethics Commissioner and office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner. The Auditor General's review of our system and processes uncovered no systems deficiencies and deemed our procedures acceptable.

The branch entered the budget information for fiscal 1997-98 early in the year and completed a full reconciliation of LAO and Treasury financial information by March 31. The fiscal year-end was successfully completed, including all year-end accruals.

With the assistance of Deloitte & Touche, upgrades to the system were implemented periodically throughout the year. The conversion to Windows 95 by all branch staff significantly improved reporting capabilities, including consolidated reporting to Alberta Treasury. The branch also implemented the ability to include additional comments on cheque remittances and

finalized testing for the direct deposit of payments and reimbursements. Full use of this system for MLAs is scheduled for January 1998, with phased-in implementation for employees and major vendors.

Staff worked very hard to continue learning about the new system and its features. They spent considerable time working on the reconciliation project and ensuring that fiscal year-end went smoothly, given the election activities and changing clientele. They also took the initiative to make contact with new and returning MLAs and Legislature and constituency office staff.

Prior to the election, the branch participated in reviewing and updating the dissolution policy and ensured that the policy was followed in regard to administrative services and financial transactions by and for MLAs. The branch also contacted members who were not running for re-election to facilitate their transition.

The branch participated in both group and individual orientations for new and returning members. New accounts were created to handle the transition from the 23rd to the 24th Legislature, and the branch was able to process all ongoing payments without any change in the level of service. The branch handled 28 office moves, including the administration of leases. Telephone and inventory lists were updated.

In conjunction with the many constituency office moves, the branch co-ordinated telephone installations or upgrades for 32 constituency offices. The telephone upgrade project included seven more offices that were in the planning stages at the end of 1997 and other offices which will be evaluated in 1998. Staff spent many hours placing orders, troubleshooting with clients and vendors, following up on installations, assisting with on-site programming, training or coaching over the phone, and ensuring the billings were correct and complete.

The Presiding Officers' Conference occupied many branch members as staff provided backup support for the conference as well as co-ordinating the companions program. In October the manager and the administrative officer attended the Docuworld '97 Symposium in Calgary. This day-long conference highlighted current developments and future innovations in the document management area. While in Calgary, staff visited six constituency offices as well. The branch hopes to continue to outreach to clients via telephone, personal visits and orientations, and through correspondence. Having met and spoken with so many clients this year has helped staff build positive relationships and remain sensitive to the needs of those clients.

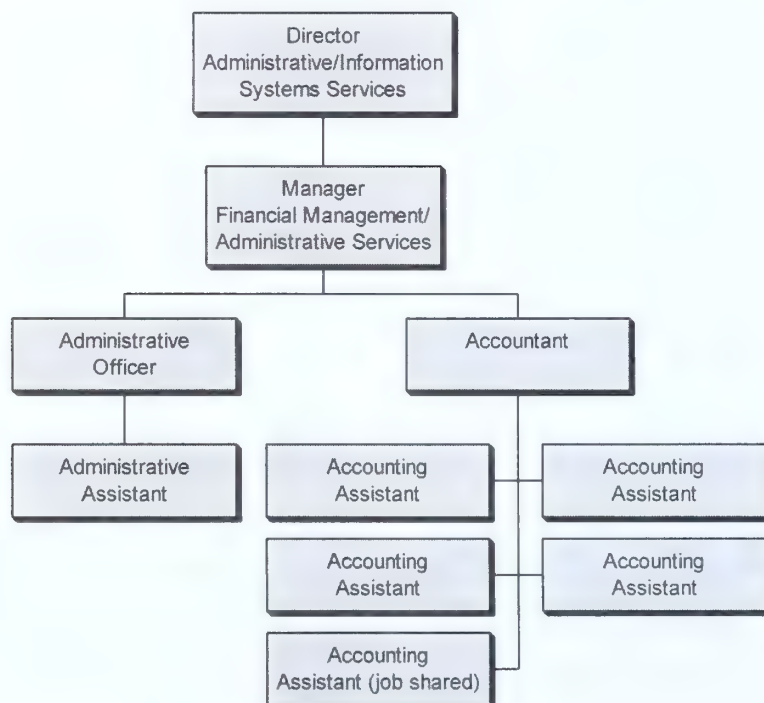
The branch helped prepare the 1997-98 budget which was approved by the Members' Services Committee in November. The branch

then provided budget information to Alberta Treasury for inclusion in provincial estimates. Fiscal year-end activities were very hectic because of the election and orientation activities ongoing at the same time and final reconciliations between Great Plains/Dynamics and the government's financial system. The branch was successful in finishing the processing and submission of year-end schedules on time for the Legislative Assembly Office, Ethics Office, and the Freedom of Information and Privacy Office.

The branch also continued to monitor and manage Legislative Assembly Office assets and co-ordinate insurance and risk management services, including an annual inventory and risk assessment.

Caroline Bowler, Jeanine Willoughby, and Benedict Dy left the branch this past year. To fill the gaps, Tracy Reyes and Darren Joy have proved to be very capable additions to the team.

Financial Management and Administrative Services Organization Chart



Comparative Statistics

	1997	1996
Invoices coded and data entered (ledger 19A)	19,776	N/A
Invoices coded and data entered (ledger 19E)	232	N/A
Invoices coded and data entered (ledger 19F)	298	N/A
Constituency offices, moved	28	3
Constituency offices, new	5	0
Constituency offices, closed	1	3
Telecommunications services installed or moved	48	3
Mail processed	14,144	17,041
Direct purchase orders issued	187	195
MLA purchase orders processed	6,000	5,400
Other requests processed	2,880	2,700
Special requests processed	260	200
Revenues:		
Hansard	\$ 17,390.70	\$ 35,916.41
Sessional	\$ 29,852.98	\$ 20,949.44
Private Bills	\$ 1,400.00	\$ 1,000.00
Gift Shop	\$ 69,803.00	\$ 65,824.46
Library	\$ 7,714.22	\$ 16,140.48
Other	\$ 5,061.37	\$ 12,598.54
TOTAL	<u>\$131,222.27</u>	<u>\$153,339.81</u>

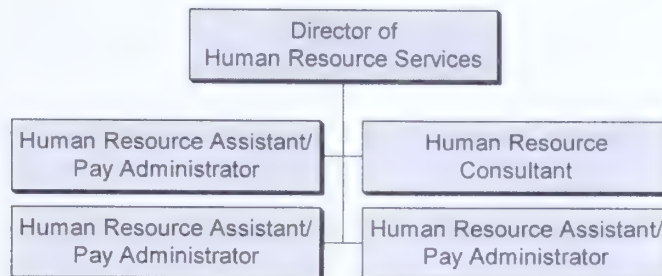
Summary of Budget Estimates by Account

	Description	1997-98	1996-97
	Human Resource Expenses		
	Earnings - Management	\$ 675,292	\$ 565,422
	Earnings - Nonmanagement	4,520,659	4,378,627
	Employer Contributions	846,704	792,795
	Allowances & Benefits	101,815	91,445
Subtotal		\$6,144,470	\$5,828,289
	Operational Expenses		
	Travel	\$1,425,169	\$1,442,606
	Advertising	132,550	108,616
	Insurance	24,268	17,900
	Postage & Freight	193,256	202,582
	Office Equipment Rental/Purchase	373,468	279,171
	Telecommunications	434,701	569,201
	Equipment Repairs & Maintenance	56,011	50,220
	Other Labour & Services	584,930	772,229
	Data Processing Services	298,632	252,225
	Hosting	72,617	58,288
	Other Administration/Supplies	510,220	550,869
Subtotal		\$4,105,822	\$4,303,907
	Grants		
	General	\$2,560	\$2,560
Subtotal		\$2,560	\$2,560
	Payments to Members of the Legislative Assembly		
	Payments to MLAs	\$7,590,972	\$6,296,849
Subtotal		\$7,590,972	\$6,296,849
	Members' Services Allowances		
	Constituency Office Allowances	\$3,275,346	\$3,275,346
	Communication Allowances	973,914	973,914
	Promotion Allowances	293,536	293,536
Subtotal		\$4,542,796	\$4,542,796
	Revenue		
	Fees & Permits	(\$ 1,200)	(\$ 1,600)
	Other Revenue	(130,438)	(125,638)
Subtotal		(\$131,638)	(\$127,238)
Net Total		\$22,254,982	\$20,847,163



Human Resource Services

Cheryl Scarlett, Director



This has been a year of accomplishment for Human Resource Services. The implementation of the new First Choice benefit plan was a success for the branch, making the first part of the year a very busy one. The pace continued with the election in March as the branch handled a large turnover in MLAs, caucus and constituency office staff. Recruitment of new staff also remained a priority with the branch.

Managers and staff of the Legislative Assembly Office and caucus and constituency offices converted to the First Choice benefit plan on March 1. The branch conducted nine information sessions in January outlining the plan guidelines and significant changes in our benefit program and met with staff individually as required so they could make informed choices on their options. The pay system was modified to accommodate the program, and the labour-intensive task of updating individual benefits for each employee was completed successfully. Human Resource Services continued to provide advice and guidance in the maintenance of the program throughout the year. As well, the branch continues to be the primary contact for MLA remuneration and benefits issues and to administer the extended benefits program for former members.

After months of preparation prior to the election, 26 new members were oriented by Human Resource Services through individual

meetings. The branch also assisted 17 retiring and nine defeated members on their exit from office as well as co-ordinated all associated changes, terminations and commencements of caucus and constituency staff as a result of turnover at election time.

The branch played a leading role in recruiting for positions in all areas of the Legislative Assembly Office. The staff turnover during the year continued to demonstrate that the training and development received while working at the LAO is a valuable asset to employees' careers and to future employers. In consultation with the Sergeant-at-Arms, the branch was also very involved in developing a new brochure as a recruitment tool for the page program. In addition, assistance was provided to the House of Commons in recruiting for their page program.

For the first time, T-4s were produced in-house thanks to the ongoing success of the Legislative Assembly payroll system. This capability allowed frontline service without third-party involvement and was another significant step in increasing the independence of the Legislative Assembly Office. The branch was also involved in the ongoing maintenance and enhancement of the payroll system and handled increased payment activity because of the election, the cabinet shuffle, and increased committee activity.

The branch successfully implemented a 1.5 percent compensation increase to all employees of

the Legislative Assembly Office, consistent with managers and nonbargaining employees of the government. This increase was effective April 1, 1997.

Contract administration was one of the priorities for the branch as staff reviewed and enhanced all employment and independent contractor agreements. The branch also provided ongoing advice and assistance to members and staff related to contract administration issues.

As part of a proactive strategy to enhance job satisfaction, a committee was established to promote awareness and acceptance of ergonomic principles in support of a safe and productive work environment. Human Resource Services

took the lead role in this endeavour, with representatives from all branches participating.

As always, the branch was involved in ongoing liaison with members, managers and staff of the Legislative Assembly Office related to day-to-day human resource management issues. This year the LAO formally recognized employees contributions during the employee service awards ceremony in December. Human Resource Services prepared and confirmed information as required for the presentation of these awards. As well, the branch continued to provide ongoing assistance to the offices of the Ethics Commissioner and the Information and Privacy Commissioner.



Special Events

50th Anniversary of the Citizenship Act

On January 21 a special citizenship ceremony was held in the Alberta Legislative Chamber commemorating the 50th anniversary of the Canadian Citizenship Act. Judge Margaret Osbaldeston presided over the ceremony when 54 new Canadians took the oath of citizenship. His Honour the Hon. H.A. "Bud" Olson, P.C.; the Hon. Anne McLellan; Speaker Stanley S. Schumacher, Q.C.; the Hon. Shirley McClellan; and Mr. Terry Cavanagh, Edmonton City Councillor, participated in the swearing-in ceremony. Also participating were Maurice and Nichola Labrosse, the second and third Canadians in history to take the oath.

Fort Garry - Fort Edmonton Trail

On Monday, February 17, 1997, the Alberta Legislature Building Rotunda was the site of the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada commemorative ceremony of Fort Garry - Fort Edmonton. Speaker Stanley S. Schumacher, Q.C., participated in the unveiling of the commemorative plaque on behalf of all members of the Alberta Legislature. Other platform participants were Trudy Cowan, Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada; Delia Gray; Audrey Poitras, President, Métis Nation of Alberta Association; and City Councillor Allan Bolstad.

Laying-up of Cadet Corps Flag

A ceremony was held in the Alberta Legislature Rotunda on February 23 to lay-up the Royal Canadian Army Cadet Corps #180 Flag. Speaker Stanley Schumacher, Q.C., received the flag on behalf of the members. Participating in the ceremony were Mr. Keith Wakefield, Secretary, Army Cadet League of Canada; Major Gen. Wheatly, Col. Commandant of Cadets; Capt Hickford, Alberta Cadet League President; and Lieutenant D. Mills, C.O., 180 Royal Canadian Army Cadets.

Unveiling of Speaker Schumacher's Portrait

On October 23 Stanley Schumacher, Q.C., 23rd Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, attended the unveiling of his official portrait at a ceremony in the Legislature Building. The portrait is the work of Alberta artist Tag Kim. Speaker Ken Kowalski presided at the event, with other guests including Premier Ralph Klein; Mr. Grant Mitchell, Leader of the Official Opposition; Ms Pam Barrett, Leader of the ND Opposition; Members of the Legislative Assembly; former Speakers Art Dixon and Gerard Amerongen; friends and family. Following the unveiling, a reception and presentation took place in the Speaker's Suite.

Remembrance Day

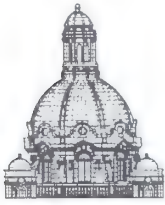
On October 20 the Alberta-Northwest Territorial Command Royal Canadian Legion presented poppies to the Hon. H.A. "Bud" Olson, Speaker Ken Kowalski, and to representatives from government and opposition caucus. On November 10 Speaker Ken Kowalski laid a wreath on behalf of the Legislative Assembly. Veterans and the Alberta Union of Provincial Employees laid wreaths in memory of civil servants who gave their lives in the two world wars and the Korean conflict.

Legislature Pedway Fitness Trail Opening

On November 12 Speaker Ken Kowalski officially opened the new pedway fitness trail. Over 150 people were in attendance for the event, which featured guest instructors from the Grant MacEwan Centre for Sport and Wellness.

Christmas at the Legislature

On December 4 Premier Ralph Klein and Speaker Ken Kowalski shared Christmas greetings with the public in the Rotunda. The University of Alberta mixed chorus provided seasonal music, following which the Premier turned on the Christmas lights on the Legislature Grounds.



Former Members of the Legislative Assembly

Contact with former members continued. In May the Speaker wrote an update of activities in the Legislature, enclosing the 1996 annual report. In December Christmas greetings and further updates were sent.

Obituaries

On March 22 Mr. Frederick Alexander Kidd passed away. Mr. Kidd represented the constituency of Banff for the Progressive Conservative Party. He was first elected in the 1975 general election and served until 1979. He served on the following select standing committees: Public Affairs, Law and Regulations, Public Accounts, Privileges and Elections, Standing Orders and Printing, and Private Bills.

On March 25 Dr. Hugh Macarthur Horner passed away. Dr. Horner was first elected in the 1967 general election, re-elected in 1971, 1975, and 1979. He represented the constituencies of Lac Ste. Anne and Barrhead for the Progressive Conservative Party. During his years of service he served as Deputy Premier from 1971 to 1979, minister of agriculture from 1971 to 1975, minister of trans-

portation from 1975 to 1979, and minister of economic development from March to September of 1979.

On April 1 Mr. Tom Donnelly passed away. Mr. Donnelly represented the constituency of Calgary-Millican for the Progressive Conservative Party from 1975 to 1979. He served on the following select standing committees: Law and Regulations, Private Bills, Public Accounts, and Public Affairs.

On May 7 Mr. Thomas Lysons passed away. Mr. Lysons represented the constituency of Vermilion-Viking for the Progressive Conservative Party. He was first elected in 1975 and served until 1986. During his years of service Mr. Lysons served on the following select standing committees: Law and Regulations, Private Bills, and Public Affairs.

On June 28 Mr. Thomas Neil Musgrove passed away. He was first elected in the 1982 general election and served the constituency of Bow Valley for the Progressive Conservative Party until his retirement in 1993.



Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Alberta Branch

1997 annual report



Commonwealth Parliamentary Association

The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) is an association of members of Commonwealth parliaments who, irrespective of race, religion, or culture, are united by community of interest, respect for the rule of law, and individual rights and freedoms, and by pursuit of the positive ideals of parliamentary democracy.

Canada was one of the six original member countries of the CPA when it was founded in 1911 under the name of the Empire Parliamentary Association. Association branches now exist in 134 national, state, provincial, and territorial parliaments with a total membership of over 14,000 parliamentarians. Each provincial and territorial Legislative Assembly in Canada as well as the federal Parliament comprises a branch of the CPA. All Members of the Legislative Assembly of Alberta are members of the Alberta branch of the CPA.

President's Report

Speaker Ken Kowalski, President of the Alberta Branch of the CPA

When the Members of the Legislative Assembly elected me to be their Speaker on April 14, I also became the President of the Alberta Branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association. In doing so, I inherited the privilege of serving the remainder of former Speaker Stan Schumacher's term on the CPA executive committee.

I have had the opportunity to meet with other Canadian Speakers and Speakers from around the Commonwealth. I have discussed parliamentary issues with Alberta members over lunch and with Canadian MPs, Senators, and other provincial representatives on various occasions. At international conferences and during individual visits, I have talked with people from all over the world. It never ceases to amaze me that we have a parliamentary system that embodies over 700 years of democratic tradition yet is still alive and responsive to the issues of today.

Having said that, I must note that each of us, as elected members, has a special responsibility to ensure that this system stays alive and effective. In

today's world of the global economy and modern communications technology, this means we must know what is happening elsewhere and share our experiences and insights with others.

Consider the value of meeting a member from South Africa and hearing firsthand about the brutality of apartheid and the struggle to build democratic systems up from scratch in just a few years. That experience can change forever the way we look at our own situation here. After that, how could we fail to be better representatives? How could the system itself not benefit? This is just one example of hundreds of experiences our own members and staff have gained from, largely thanks to the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association.

The CPA is a valuable organization that serves well over a quarter of the world's population. I am pleased to represent Alberta within the CPA and to foster among MLAs and the public an awareness of the value of our democratic institutions and the need to defend them and keep them alive.

Secretary's Report

W.J. David McNeil, Secretary of the Alberta Branch of the CPA and Clerk of the Legislative Assembly

During 1997, the Alberta branch of the CPA participated in five major conferences. First, the Presiding Officers' Conference in January brought together Speakers, Deputy Speakers, and Deputy Chairmen of Committees from all across Canada. Alberta was pleased to host this gathering in Edmonton, and we received many compliments from attendees on the quality of the events and venues and on the warm hospitality they received during a weekend of -40 C weather. Second was the CPA Regional Conference in Regina in July, followed by three conferences in September: the Conference Assemblée Internationale des Parlementaires de Langue Française in Toronto, the Parliamentary Conference of the Americas in Quebec City, and the CPA Plenary Conference in Mauritius.

The branch continued to recognize the importance of educating young people about parliamentary self-government. To that end we sponsored two young Albertans studying in the United Kingdom to represent the province at a youth parliament in Manchester, England, awarded two bursaries, and conducted our annual provincewide essay contest among grade 6 students.

This year I was able to attend the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Plenary Conference in Mauritius in September and the meetings of the Association of Clerks-at-the-Table in Commonwealth Parliaments which were part of

the plenary conference. I presented a paper entitled "Technology and Parliament: Present Realities and Future Prospects," which included a demonstration on how Alberta's parliament is applying technology.

Under the auspices of the South Africa/Canada Program on Governance funded by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), I spent a week in the South African province of Mpumalanga, Alberta's twin province. The purpose of the visit was to assist members and staff of the Mpumalanga Legislative Assembly with the development of their parliament. I met with the Speaker, Deputy Speaker, the Chairman of Committees, the Secretary of Parliament, and the management staff of the Assembly. As well, I observed a number of committee meetings and was able to provide parliamentary staff with a wide variety of information on the operation of Alberta's parliament. It is expected that this visit will result in an ongoing dialogue between the parliaments of Mpumalanga and Alberta on procedural and administrative issues.

I was also able to accept an invitation to go to Capetown, South Africa, to make a seminar presentation to the staff of the two houses of the Federal Parliament, the National Assembly and the National Council of the Provinces, on technology and parliament. This was a follow-up to the presentation I made at the Mauritius conference on this subject.

effective accountability framework within our parliamentary system are critical to the course of democratic government in the future.

- *Increasing Public Respect for the Parliamentary Institutions: Is It Time for More Outreach?* By LeRoy Johnson

People everywhere are cynical about politicians and democratic institutions. We have a highly educated public in Canada. We need to learn to use the media effectively and to reach out to the public in other ways in order to engage them in the legislative process and convince them they can make a difference if they get involved.

Effective democracy depends on informed and involved people, educated people, people who are in a position to make effective decisions. Outreach strengthens democracy, builds partnerships with the public, builds trust, and combats cynicism.

Delegate Reports (edited for length)

- The business sessions were useful and generally stimulating. The other activities were most enjoyable and often inspiring. It was beneficial to get to know many more friends. We were especially grateful for the opportunity to become better acquainted with our Alberta colleagues.

LeRoy Johnson

- I found especially interesting the sessions on public education and devolution of responsibilities. The first indicated that parliaments need to increase outreach into the communities in order to build trust in and increase respect for parliamentary institutions. The second concluded that devolution enables governments to be more sensitive to local circumstances but emphasized that funding must be adequate in order for devolution to be successful.

Rob Loughheed

- The Saskatchewan organizers did a fabulous job in not only hosting all the delegates but for the daily sessions. This conference provided an opportunity to meet with our own delegates in a nonpartisan, socializing atmosphere, giving better understanding of each other.

I had one MNA from Quebec comment that he was overwhelmed by how much patriotism western Canada showed on closing night. He had never seen this in his province. He also indicated that not all Quebecers are separatist and was hoping we could meet in the future and discuss Canada's future.

Dave Broda

CPA Plenary Conference

Mauritius, September 14-25

Conference Theme: *Into the New Millennium: the Role of Government and Parliaments*

Conference Agenda

- 1 Trade, Investment and Development: the Road to Commonwealth Prosperity
- 2 Ensuring Ethical Standards for Parliamentarians, the Executive, and the Public Service
- 3 How can the Commonwealth Enhance and Protect Human Rights?
- 4 Strengthening the Partnership Between Men and Women in Political Participation: The Proper Role of the Commonwealth Women

Parliamentarians Group with the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association

- 5 How can Commonwealth Parliaments and Governments Co-operate to Protect the Global Environment, Including the Marine Environment?
- 6 How can Parliaments and Parliamentarians Take Full Advantage of Modern Communications Technology?

Alberta Delegation

Speaker Ken Kowalski, Deputy Speaker Don Tanas, and David McNeil, Clerk

Summary of Delegate Reports

- I traveled to Mauritius with the Ugandan delegation and was able to get to know some of them quite well over the next nine days.

President Uteem's opening address focused on the inequalities in the standards of living which prevail in the ranks of Commonwealth countries and of the important role of democratic institutions. The address by Chief Emeka Anyaoku, Commonwealth Secretary General, was most impressive as he

challenged delegates "to combat poverty and inequality by making a success of globalization and integration for the benefit of all." Noteworthy sessions were held on parliamentarians' use of modern communications technology and on international co-operation to protect the global environment. In all, I truly enjoyed the experience of attending the conference.

Don Tannas

XIV Conference Assemblée Internationale des Parlementaires de Langue Française

Toronto, Ontario, September 15-17

Conference Agenda

1. Jurisdictional reports
2. The International Role of the Parliamentarian
3. The Co-operative Movement and Economic Development of Francophones in America

Alberta Delegation

MLA Paul Langevin and Clerk Assistant Louise Kamuchik

Delegate Reports

Attendance at this interparliamentary organization's meeting provided an excellent opportunity

to be part of the initiation and implementation of action in areas of interparliamentary co-operation and democratic development, particularly in Haiti, and to exchange information and ideas with our friends and neighbours.

Because Alberta is applying to be accepted as an associate member the Alberta delegation was invited to attend the meeting of the section presidents. I gave the gathering an overview of Alberta's francophone community and extended Speaker Kowalski's invitation to hold the meeting of section presidents in Alberta in March 1998.

Paul Langevin

Parliamentary Conference of the Americas

Quebec City, September 18-22

Conference theme: *Towards the Americas of the Year 2005: Democracy, Development and Prosperity.*

Conference Agenda

- 1 The Process of Hemispheric Integration:
Overview, assessment, and future prospects.
Workshops on the legislative, political, social, economic, and cultural impacts of the integration of the Americas and the issues of: democracy and human rights, eradication of poverty, free trade and employment, education and training, social and sanitary policies, culture/language/communications, and environment and natural resources.
- 2 The Role and Participation of Parliamentarians in the Process of Integration of the Americas.

Workshops on the means of action of parliamentarians within their electoral districts and legislative assemblies and within interparliamentary organizations or institutions.

- 3 Summary Report and Conclusions

Alberta Delegation

MLAs Mr. Gary Dickson, Mr. Paul Langevin, Mr. Hung Pham, Mr. Ivan Strang, and Clerk Assistant Mrs. Louise Kamuchik.

Delegate Reports (Edited for length)

- At the American Summit in Miami in 1994, the heads of state and government agreed to create a free-trade area of the Americas (FTTA) by the year 2005, the largest free-trade zone in the world, representing more

than 750 million people.

A number of internationally renowned guest speakers were featured, including Mr. Oscar Arias Sánchez, 1987 Nobel Peace Prize winner and former President of Costa Rica. Approximately 700 delegates from over 100 legislatures attended.

I sincerely appreciate the support of my attendance at this very interesting and historic conference, particularly in light of what will be developing in the coming years as we move towards the integration of the Americas. I especially appreciated the exchange that takes place between parliamentarians during the social functions that enhances our knowledge and appreciation of one another and serves as a basis for formulating new contacts and friendships.

Paul Langevin

- The main theme of the conference seemed to be to get the Americas to become a free trade zone. As I see it, the two most important problems these countries are facing today are:
 1. They are implicitly blaming the United States for the arms race. Speaker after speaker condemned the arms race in their own region. They feel the money should be spent on health care, education, and the elimination of poverty.
 2. The foreign debt level these countries experience is high. Some delegates claim their countries need to spend 40 percent of the budget to cover interest payments on foreign debt alone.

My conclusion regarding the conference is that the economic integration process of the entire region is already taking place. Participants must find a way to manage the process in order to maximize the benefits and minimize the risks. The road ahead will be rough due to intense differences between the United States and the other Americas.

Hung Pham

- I found it very informative and enlightening to

see how far things have progressed from the separation point of view. I was able to garner quite a bit of information that I transferred to the Premier which will be helpful in organizing discussions being held on the unity issue to enable him to organize for when we discuss the unity issue.

It was nice to interact and work with different people from all over the Americas. I was fortunate to be able to attend the section on sustainable development and brought back information that will be useful for department heads.

Ivan Strang

- During the conference it became clear that one of the many challenges facing economic integration is the vast disparities in democratic values and traditions, education levels, income distribution, and wealth. It was noted by more than one speaker that in a number of nations such democracy as exists is constructed on the barest foundations and is only a coup d'état away from tyranny.

A second "conference" had to do with competition between federal and Quebec representatives for support of other nations over the future of Quebec.

A third "conference" involved a series of meetings with several U.S. states and discussions of Canada-U.S. trade issues and changes in U.S. immigration rules. Special attention was given to north/south transportation corridors and agricultural trade.

I found the information on a range of issues and contacts invaluable. I appreciate the opportunity I had to represent the Legislative Assembly of Alberta at this very first hemispheric gathering of legislators. It was also fascinating to discuss reaction to the "Calgary Declaration" with so many Quebecers both elected and non-elected.

Gary Dickson

Commonwealth Youth Parliament

Manchester, England, November 24

1997 was the year of the Commonwealth, and to celebrate that fact, the CPA held a Youth Parliament in Manchester, England. Ninety young people from all over the Commonwealth participated in this event. Susanne McAndless and Angie Woo were chosen to represent the Alberta branch.

"This event provided a learning opportunity by demonstrating how young people have something valuable to say about political issues and can rally together behind an issue that they feel passionate about. Overall, it was one of the most interesting and fun opportunities I have had the fortune to experience." Susanne McAndless

Bursaries and Essay Contest

Bursaries are presented annually to nominees from Tuxis and the Alberta Girls' Parliament to increase interest in parliament among young Albertans. On June 18 Speaker Ken Kowalski presented bursaries to Veronique Zelyas from Tuxis and to Cheryl Clark and Michelle Walters from the Alberta Girls' Parliament.

A provincewide essay contest is held annually for grade 6 students to encourage greater awareness of the Commonwealth and the parliamentary system. This year the grand prize went to Carl Conradi.

Visiting Delegates

The Speaker, Deputy Speaker, Deputy Chairman of Committees, and staff of the Legislative Assembly Office are involved in ongoing liaison with members and staff of other parliaments and with other representatives of foreign countries. In 1997 they hosted the following visitors and events:

Feb 26/27 Tasmanian Delegation

April 3 Mount Royal College

April 4 Alberta Girls' Parliament

April 30 The Honourable Dr. Mathews Phosa, Premier, Mpumalanga, South Africa

May 8 Mr. Peter Maier-Oswald, Consul General of the Federal Republic of Germany

June 3 Dr. Manmohan Singh, Chairman, Commerce Committee Parliament of India

June 9 His Excellency Ananda Goonasekera, High Commissioner for the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka

June 10 Mr. Oleksandr Cherenkov, MP, Ukraine

June 18 His Excellency Leopold David-Gnahoui, Ambassador of the Republic of Benin

July 2 Mr. Pierfrancesco De Cerchio, Vice Consul of the Republic of Italy

Oct 23 His Excellency Fernando M. Valenzuela, Ambassador of the Kingdom of Spain

Nov 4 Miss Lisa Bobbie Schriber Hughes, United States Consul General

Nov 24 Chinese Delegation

Dec 19 The Honourable Cruz Bustamante, Speaker of the California Legislature

Participation in National and International Organizations

In 1997 Members, officers, and staff of the Legislative Assembly participated in the following parliamentary conferences, seminars, meetings, and visits:

Assemblée internationale des parlementaires de langue française, America region

Association of Clerks-at-the-Table in Canada annual professional development seminar

Association of Parliamentary Counsel in Canada conference

Canadian Association of Sergeants-at-Arms 17th annual conference

Canadian Presiding Officers 14th annual conference

Canadian Council of Public Accounts Committees 16th annual conference

Canadian Parliamentary Association executive committee mid-year meeting

Commonwealth Parliamentary Association 21st Canadian regional seminar

Commonwealth Parliamentary Association 36th Canadian regional conference

Commonwealth Parliamentary Association 43rd annual conference

Hansard Association of Canada 25th annual conference

Legislative Visitor Services National Conference

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